

(c) calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price calculated in step (b) and the bids collected in step (a).

2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of creating an invoice for each of the plurality of providers and consumers from the settlement information calculated in step (c) and forwarding the invoice for each provider and consumer to the provider's and consumer's work station over the Internet.

3. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein step (b) comprises stacking the supply side bids collected in step (a) from lowest price to highest and matching demand for the market service with a bid in the stack.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising step (d) of collecting contract information from at least one provider or consumer.

22. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising step (d) of notifying a provider or consumer that the bid information collected in step (a) is accepted.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step (d) of providing a database population component that reorganizes data from many different sources into a common repository designed to suit providers' or consumers' needs.

26. (Amended) The method of claim 25 further comprising a step (e) of providing a report generation component that creates a report whenever a provider or consumer so requests wherein the report generation component takes data from the database population component.

27. (Amended) A system for managing and coordinating the operation of a competitive energy marketplace, the system comprising:

a market operator;

a power system component that represents a network model of a physical power system including generating units, load facilities, transmission lines, and network areas;

a customer component that manages all information about entities that have a business relationship with the market operator, wherein the power system component and customer component are operatively coupled to the market operator to receive data from the market operator;

a bid component that enables customers to submit bids for energy services, wherein customers include energy services providers and energy services consumers;

a meter reading component that stores meter readings submitted by energy services consumers, wherein the bid component and meter reading component are operatively coupled to energy services consumers;

a settlement component that determines an equal energy services clearing price for all consumers during a predetermined time interval based on bids from providers and consumers and that financially settles all markets based upon meter readings, operational information, bids and clearing prices, wherein the settlement component is operatively coupled to the power system, customer, bid and meter reading components to receive data therefrom; and

a bill component operatively coupled to receive data from the customer and settlement components, wherein the bill component summarizes the financial activity for each customer to be used on an invoice for services provided and/or received.

35. (Amended) A method of facilitating, managing and coordinating the operation of a competitive marketplace using the Internet, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) collecting supply side bid information for quantity and price of market services from a plurality of market services providers and collecting demand side bids for quantity of market services from a plurality of market services consumers;

(b) collecting contract information for market services from at least one of the plurality of market services providers and consumers;

(c) scheduling the operation of units that provide the market services according to the bid and contract information collected in steps (a) and (b);

(d) deploying the operation of the units scheduled in step (c);

(e) collecting meter reading information from the units scheduled in step (c);

and

(f) settling the market in accordance with the bid and contract information collected in steps (a) and (b) and meter reading information collected in step (e), wherein settling the market comprises calculating a clearing price for market services for a predetermined time interval by matching demand for market services with a marginal value of lowest priced supply bids, the clearing price being equal for all market services consumers.

36. (Amended) The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of billing the plurality of market services consumers according to the settlement determined in step (f).

37. (Amended) The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of providing the schedule determined in step (c) to the plurality of market services providers and consumers.

38. (Amended) The method of claim 35 further comprising step (g) of providing settlement information determined in step (f) to the plurality of market services providers and consumers.

39. (Amended) The method of claim 35 herein steps (a), (b) and (e) are performed over the Internet.

40. (Amended) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for interfacing with a competitive marketplace, the computer program comprising:

code for collecting supply side bids for quantity and price of market services from a plurality of market services providers over the Internet and collecting demand side bids for quantity of market services from a plurality of market services consumers over the Internet;

code for calculating a clearing price for a market service for a predetermined time interval by matching demand for market services with a marginal value of lowest priced supply bids, the clearing price being equal for all consumers; and

code for calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price calculated and the bids collected.

41. (Amended) An article of manufacture for facilitating the operation of a competitive marketplace, the article of manufacture comprising a computer readable medium having a management interface instructions comprising:

collecting supply side bids for quantity and price of market services from a plurality of market services providers over the Internet and collecting demand side bids for quantity of market services from a plurality of market services consumers over the Internet;

calculating a clearing price for a market service for a predetermined time interval by matching demand for market services with a marginal value of lowest priced supply bids, the clearing price being equal for all consumers; and

calculating settlement information based upon the clearing price and the bids collected.